

The DEFINITE ARTICLE

We ask a celebrity a set of devilishly probing questions – and only accept THE definitive answer. This week it's broadcaster Selina Scott



'I won my first job in the States after I interviewed Prince Andrew in 1985 and he asked for my number'

The prized possession you value above all others... My Scottish grandmother Beatrice's press cuttings. She was a singer who performed all over Scotland from 1907-12. She left the book to me when she died in 1974 at 91.

The biggest regret you wish you could amend... Giving up ballet when I was 13. Margot Fonteyn was my heroine and I'd love to have followed in her footsteps, but I grew to be too tall [5ft 9in]. I was devastated to give it up.

The book that holds an everlasting resonance... My Family And Other Animals by Gerald Durrell about his life on Corfu in the 30s. It's full of innocence and laughter.

The pet hate that makes your hackles rise... Opinionated twerps who cannot see the bigger picture. Local politicians are the worst.

The priority activity if you were the Invisible Woman for a day... Steal Donald Trump's hairpiece, then bury it in the sand dunes of Aberdeenshire – the unique landscape I believe he's wrecking with his golf development.

Right: Margot Fonteyn. Above right: hedgehogs. Far right: Wakaya private island resort, Fiji

The temptation you wish you could resist... Giving a home to animals at my farm in North Yorkshire. I have 11 goats, two cats, four dogs and several hedgehogs. I can't take any more!

The film you can watch time and time again... Doctor Zhivago for Omar Sharif's eyes! I once ran into him at a dinner and he paid me one of the best compliments ever. He's a smoothie, but I won't reveal what he said!

The person who has influenced you most... My father, Charles. I have three sisters and a brother and he imbued in us all a strong sense of independence. He died in 2008 aged 81.

The figure from history for whom you'd most like to buy a pie and a pint... Queen Boudicca. She wore a big gold necklace in battle, so I'd like to know what happened to it and to witness her legendary piercing stare.

The piece of wisdom you would pass on to a child... Never let your chances pass you by.



The poem that touches your soul... The Soldier by Rupert Brooke. It is so moving.

The unlikely interest that engages your curiosity... Archaeology. My

farmhouse is littered with Stone Age artefacts. I even discovered a 6,000-year-old flint axe head.

The treasured item you lost and wish you could have again... The athleticism of my youth! I was a jolly good runner and I could even bend over backwards to walk like a crab.

The unending quest that drives you on... Turning my new luxury natural fibres business into a global brand.

The misapprehension about yourself you wish you could erase... I've reached that state of grace when, frankly, I don't give a damn.

The event that altered the course of your life and character... Interviewing Prince Andrew on The Wogan Show in 1985, when he asked me for my telephone number. A vice president of the television company CBS saw the show and offered me a job in America.

The crime you would commit knowing you could get away with it... I'd hack into the Government computer to change the Honours List. Virginia McKenna should be made a Dame for her Born Free Foundation.

The song that means most to you... My Luve is Like a Red Red Rose by Robert Burns. It's followed me through emotional moments of my life.

The way you would spend your fantasy 24 hours, with no travel restrictions... I'd wake up at the Wakaya private island resort in Fiji and have fruit for breakfast overlooking the South Pacific. No tea or coffee, I always have hot water first thing. I'd spend the morning scuba diving, then fly to Kenya to see the lions. I'd grab a quick salad for lunch before arriving on the Island of Bute in Scotland. I'd enjoy a cream tea at Kildavanan Bay, then sail in a small boat up the west coast. I'd pop to Whitby for fish and chips and a cup of tea. The day would end with a long walk on the North York Moors with my dogs Nip and Kiki before going to bed with a great book.

The happiest moment you will cherish forever... The last time I dived into the warm Mediterranean after a long cold winter in the North.

The saddest time that shook your world... Seeing desperately poor children in Ethiopia come alive with joy when they were given T-shirts and plastic footballs. I was on a relief mission with the Red Cross in 1985.

The unfulfilled ambition that continues to haunt you... Interviewing Prince Philip. He's a fascinating man and I was disappointed to be thwarted by internal politics at the BBC after setting up an interview with the Duke for his 90th birthday in 2011. Fiona Bruce got the job, but I don't hold anything against her for that.

The philosophy that underpins your life... Do unto others as you would have them do unto you.

The order of service at your funeral... I'd want it simple and for a choir to sing The Lord Is My Shepherd. Then throw my ashes to the wind.

The way you want to be remembered... I'd like a big bell cast and hung in Rievaulx Abbey on the edge of the North York Moors. When it rang out, it would echo through the loveliest of valleys.

The Plug... Naturally Selina Scott is my online company selling luxury socks, scarves and hats made from natural cashmere, mohair and, soon, yak! Visit selinascott.com. ■

As told to Rob McGibbon



PHOTOGRAPHS: DAVID VENNIL GETTY/REX

PS...

Julianne Moore has already won several awards for her star turn in Still Alice, in cinemas on Friday. Juliette Binoche returns to the London stage in Antigone, at the Barbican from Wednesday. And Noel Gallagher's new album, Chasing Yesterday, is out on Monday



NEXT WEEK

- How to have a contented cat – don't miss our brilliant new series
- We're on set with the star of hit comedy Moone Boy
- PLUS Britain's biggest and best TV guide